(c) the criteria fixed for sanctioning the work related to gauge conversion after the completion of the survey?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R.VELU): (a) and (b) 7 and 1 number of surveys for gauge conversion of railway lines had been proposed in the Budgets of 2005-06 and 2006-07, respectively. 3 surveys for gauge conversion included in the Budget 2005-06 has been completed. Normally the surveys are completed within a period of two years.

(c) Project Uni-gauge was taken up on 01.04.1992 and the policy adopted for taking up gauge conversion to carry out the conversion of lines at least cost yet providing a standard of service not lower than what the rail users were getting on the Metre Gauge covering the following areas:

(a) To take up conversion of lines to develop alternative broad gauge (BG) routes obviating the need for doubling existing BG lines on these routes.

(b) To establish new BG links between stations connected by other BG lines.

(c) To establish BG connection to ports, industrial centres and locations having potential for growth.

(d) To take up conversion of lines required on strategic considerations.

(e) To minimize transshipment and to improve wagon turn around by avoiding delays at transshipment points.

Many new lines and gauge conversion projects have been taken up on socio-economic considerations for development of backward, hilly, remote and under developed areas.

PCO booths at stations

2117. PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of local/STD,PCO booths owned and operated by handicapped and blind persons at railway stations of the country;

(b) whether there was a decision to terminate their licences;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether Government have given any assurance to regularise their licences and if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether Government have received any representation for regularization of local/STD, PCO booths allotted to them; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Approximately 800 local/STD,PCO booths are operated by handicapped persons at railway stations.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) During the Budget discussion held on 13.3.2007, an assurance was given that the case of the handicapped PCO booth holders would be looked into sympathetically giving more extension.

(e) and (f) Some representations have been received. Instructions have been issued extending the contracts upto 27.10.2007.

Amount incurred on rail projects in hilly States

†2118. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of amount incurred on the construction of new rail lines and gauge conversion during the last two Five Year Plans in various hilly States of the country, State-wise;

(b) whether this incurred amount is less than other States of the country; and

(c) if so, the details of steps being taken for increasing the outlay for construction of railway lines in the hilly States in Eleventh Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAY (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) There is no such criteria being followed by Ministry of Railways for defining hilly/non-hilly States. As such, the data is not maintained in this regard.

Dilapidated residential colonies

2119. SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the Railway residential colonies in the National Capital, region Delhi as on date, location-wise;

(b) whether the accommodations in these colonies are in the dilapidated condition and there is not proper arrangement of electricity and water therein;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Details of Railway residential colonies in the National Capital, Region, Delhi as on date location-wise are in the Statement attached *{See* below).

(b) No, Sir. However, a few quarters are old.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Old quarters have been proposed for replacement on the basis of age-cum-conditions in Corporate Welfare Plan (2006-2015).

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.